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Inside Information

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2,000 PUBLICATIONS ELIMINATED IN DRIVE

Nearly 2,000 publications have been eliminated by federal departments and agencies in the government-wide drive to reduce government printing costs.

U.S. Office of Management & Budget officials say that about \$20 million will have been saved by killing the publications. An executive order was issued in April 1981 to review all government publications and audiovisuals, to eliminate "costly, redundant and superfluous" informational materials.

According to press reports, of the 1,998 titles killed in the administration's campaign, OMB records indicate that USDA led the list with almost 900 publications eliminated.

Defense and Labor departments followed with about 200 each. Others covered included virtually every major federal department or agency.

"Although it was popular enough to warrant printing of some 650,000 copies, USDA's 'Hassle-Free Guide to a Better Diet' faces starvation under the program," a FEDERAL TIMES front page news story said.

The report said USDA's "How to Buy a Christmas Tree" seems to have been dropped as another example of unnecessary government intervention.

"I can't believe there is anyone older than five or six who doesn't know how to buy a Christmas tree," OMB Deputy Director Joseph Wright was quoted as saying. He concluded that the cutback in publications will not effect most "needed and necessary" materials of public interest. "Use, not abuse, is the key phrase of this program as we evaluate the importance and use of each publication," he said, according to the news report.

AG COMMUNICATOR OFF TO HOLLAND

Hal Taylor, retired USDA director of public affairs and former editor of "Inside Information," is off to Holland (The Hague) for about 30 days.

He will be working with ISNAR (International Service for National Agricultural Research), the organization which coordinates research for international centers around the world.

Taylor will write a couple of brochures and plan some communication training for the organization.

WASHINGTON PUBLISHES "4-H REPORTER"

Washington State University has produced a new bulletin for 4-H members who are interested in becoming reporters for their clubs.

"4-H Reporter" contains separate print and broadcast sections and includes hints on taking and submitting news photos. It also contains a few tips from the editor of a community newspaper.

Dennis Brown, WSU Extension information specialist, says the 4-H supplemental material may be of interest to other states.

The 16-page booklet can be purchased for 50 cents (which includes postage) by writing to the Bulletin Department, Cooperative Extension, Cooper Publications Building, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164.

Anyone with further questions about the publication can direct them to Al Powell, who wrote the broadcast section, or to Dennis Brown at (509) 335-2511.

STC SPONSORS COMMUNICATION CONTEST

The Washington, D.C., chapter of the Society for Technical Communications is inviting technically-oriented writers, editors and illustrators to enter samples of their work in the 1982/83 technical communication contest.

Purpose of the annual contest is to encourage and identify excellence in technical communication, and to provide recognition for technical communicators who strive for such excellence in their profession.

Awards will be presented in 13 publications and 4 art categories, with winners honored at an awards dinner in December.

Top winners in each category are entered in the 1983 STC international competition, and compete with other chapter and regional winners for the international awards to be presented in St. Louis in May 1983.

Entries must be received or postmarked by November 1. Entry fees are \$15 for nonmembers and \$10 for STC members.

For additional information contact Norman Tennant, Manager, Technical Publications, LogEtronics Inc., 7001 Loisdale Road, Springfield, VA 22150.

BUDDING COMMUNICATOR SEEKS POSITION

Paul A. Gordon, a Geneva College (Pennsylvania) graduate, is looking for employment to "make use of strong and versatile writing skills, editing and decision-making abilities."

Don Lerch, Washington, D.C., communication consultant, says the "budding journalist" received honor scholarships all four years of his undergraduate years. Gordon received straight As in journalism courses, and got a 3.4 cumulative grade-point average for his B.S. degree.

He knows how to use a microcomputer, Varsity headliner, Compugraphic compewriter and an IBM selectric typewriter.

His address is: Paul A. Gordon, P.O.Box 33, Cogan Station, PA 17728. His telephone number is (717) 494-1648. Also, anyone wanting additional information can call Lerch at (202) 466-2804.

HELP BUSINESS INFORM CONSUMERS

"Helping Business Inform Consumers" is the theme of the monthly meeting of Consumer Education & Information Liaison on Wednesday, Oct. 27, from 1 to 3 p.m. in Room 6802 of the U.S. Commerce Department. Nonmembers of CEIL are invited.

COMPUTER PROGRAM TRACKS MANUSCRIPTS

A California firm has developed a new computerized manuscript tracking system, called "Write Track."

It is designed to help writers keep tabs on their freelance submissions.

The new system--which runs on microcomputers under CP/M, and requires 48k memory and two disk drives--not only keeps track of where, what and to whom a manuscript has been sent, but it also logs postage expenses.

"Write Track" can also record other submission information, such as page/word lengths, submission histories, chapter titles, sales, etc.

The system currently sells for \$100.

For more information, write to Write Track, P.O.Box 3594, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359.

"NEWSTRACK" NOT GETTING ALL NEWSCLIPS

Some questions have been raised whether the "Newstrack" electronic clipping service provided by Dialcom Inc. for users of their electronic mail system is picking up all available UPI news stories.

The answer is "No." But, Dialcom officials promised to continue working on this problem when the matter was brought to their attention recently.

John Sulzmann, Oregon State University Extension Communication Office, has been less than satisfied with the results from the search phrase "Oregon State University."

"In all honesty, we have not been overburdened with stories from the UPI wire as a result," Sulzmann says.

"In fact, we've only received 15 to 20 stories, and the items picked up have been primarily non-agricultural releases from the OSU Department of Information," he adds.

A suggestion offered to Sulzmann is to add additional search phrases, such as "Oregon Extension Service," "Oregon Agricultural Extension," and any other possible phrases which may be used by a media reporter in identifying stories related to or derived from the OSU Cooperative Extension Service.

Sulzmann also raised the question whether "Newstrack" picked up only UPI stories from the national wire. "Newstrack" picks up stories from all UPI wires (state, regional, national and international), as well as stories from Gannet News Service, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service and others.

TWO NEW COMPUTERS BUILT FOR BRIEFCASE

Now that Osborne Computer Corp. has broken ground with briefcase-size microcomputers, other high-tech companies are pushing more specialized computer terminals which can be placed into a briefcase.

Lexicon Corp. sells the LEX-21 and the LEX-31, two terminals in the \$1000 to \$2000 price range.

The Miami, Fla., company bills them as personal communications computers capable of being plugged into the nearest telephone to call up electronic mail, information from home office main-frame computers or financial wire information.

Both resemble tiny typewriters, with the LEX-21 displaying information through a printer and the LEX-31 on a one-line display screen.

And, then there is the new hand-held "electronic book" developed by a team of researchers at the University of Colorado.

The hand-held computer allows users to glean detailed information from reference libraries packaged into cartridges.

TEN NEW DIRECTIONS TRANSFORMING U.S.

John Naisbitt, publisher of the national TREND REPORT, has identified 10 major trends affecting American life today.

In a new book, "Megatrends," Naisbitt presents a picture of a growing, more human, more flexible American economy and society, where computerized information and entertainment industries are the major employers, and where the old, decaying industries have moved to other lands where the factories are newer and the workers are content with lower wages.

The trends, according to Naisbitt, are:

1. United States is moving from an industrial society to an information society, where the economic strength as a nation no longer depends as much on the manufactured goods as on the information services produced.

This past June, for the first time in history, more Americans were employed in service industries than in manufacturing, with jobs in the information and service sectors of the economy rising, steadily and strongly, despite the recession.

2. Almost from the foundation of the United States, the economy has been predominantly internal, with home markets consuming most of what was produced, and producing most of what was consumed. Today, the United States is fast becoming a part of a great, global international marketplace, where grain grown in the Midwest is as likely to be consumed in Leningrad as Lexington.

The cries for protection against foreign competition being raised by corporate and union leaders alike should not be heeded, Naisbitt says. If the United States starts erecting trade barriers against foreign competition, the result will be trade barriers raised against U.S. export goods, which will lead to economic collapse here at home.

3. The nation has become a "bottom-up" society, much different from the hierarchical "top-down" society existing as late as the 1950s. Social, political and even industrial organizations are being rebuilt from the ground up.

4. The United States is moving from a representational democracy to a participatory one. Citizens no longer depend on their elected representatives to get something done for them; they do it themselves by going to court or placing initiatives on the local and state ballots.

5. The nation is moving toward "high tech" and "high touch." Every increase in the complexity of the technology being used brings about a new social organization among the users of that technology.

6. Informal networks of communications are replacing old chain-of-command kind of communications, in business, in politics and even in the home.

7. Self-help is replacing institutional help, in areas ranging from exercise-and-nutrition to job counseling.

8. Americans are moving west and south, leaving behind what Naisbitt calls "the slowly sinking cities of the North."

9. The nation is beginning to approach problems from the long-term point of view, rather than trying to solve everything in a short-term framework.

10. People's choices in almost every aspect of life are enormously wider than they have ever been, with the nation moving from a narrow either/or society into a free-wheeling multiple-option society.

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Any items, comments and inquiries should be addressed to Stan W. Prochaska, Assistant Public Affairs Director, Room 458-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, to AGRO02 on the Dialcom electronic mail system, or call (202) 447-7454.